



The Insider

www.senate.mi.gov/switalski

Inside State Politics with State Senator Mickey Switalski Senate District 10

September 30, 2005

Welcome to the electronic version of *The Insider*. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your support and for giving me an opportunity to represent you in the Michigan Senate. It is my sincere hope that this bi-weekly e-newsletter will keep you informed of the happenings in Lansing while staying true to the traditional style of *The Insider*. If you would like to contact me, please feel free to e-mail me at senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov or call me at my Roseville or Lansing office. You can also meet me in person during my constituent hours, coming to a library near you. Call my office and make an appointment or just walk in. See schedule for details.

Campaign Finance Law Reform

I have continued with my efforts to toughen up Michigan's campaign finance laws with another bill that would increase public accountability in political campaigns.

On Tuesday, I introduced Senate Bill 780, which would require candidates and political committees to file their contributions electronically to the Secretary of State before that contribution can be spent on political activities.

By prohibiting a contribution from being spent prior to it being reported, it would allow the public to view these events in real time to see if, for example, if a political contribution follows a key vote or if certain contributions are used for certain activities. The bill would also allow the public to see who contributed to a campaign before the end of the campaign.

Political contributions are necessary to run a political campaign but they do not have to be done in a secretive manner. Campaign openness allows individuals to make judgments on who would best serve them in government and how these contributions potentially play out in public policy decisions.

In January, I also introduced Senate Bills 31 and 84, which would increase the penalty for failing to file a campaign finance report from \$1,000 to \$5,000 and would require campaign finance reports from candidates running in local elections to be available on the Internet for public scrutiny.

All three bills are currently in the Senate Government Operations Committee where they await further action and it is my sincere hope that these nonpartisan bills would be taken up soon.

Mickey's Blog: Invocation for Mother-In-Laws

Senators are given a chance to say the morning invocation prior to the start of session. Some legislators tend to give this right to a religious leader in their community. Some decide to take a bold chance and do it themselves. Regardless, it's a tradition done before each session day and it precedes all of the legislative debate and partisan bickering.

September 27 was my turn to go and I offered the following invocation, with my focus being on my wonderful mother-in-law, Janet McPhie Heaney. While some may have strained relationships with their in-laws, I am lucky to have a wonderful relationship with Janet. I would like to share my invocation with you and I have enclosed it below:

"Good morning, Lord. Thank You for all the fascinating people You have filled this earth with. Thank You for my 87-year-old mother-in-law, Janet McPhie Heaney. Thank You for letting me bring her back from Scotland last month. Thanks for convincing the U.S. department of immigration to allow her to stay with us 'til December.

Lord, what do I owe You for giving me Janet as my mother-in-law? She gets up at 8:30 a.m. and goes to bed at 10 p.m., and she cleans the house all day. She has already organized the pantry, the linen closet, given every room in the house a thorough cleaning, and as we speak, she is cleaning the garage for a second time.

Lord, even You rested on the seventh day, but Jenny never rests. She works harder than any person I have ever known. And when I come home from a hard afternoon of golfing, she insists that I lie down on the couch and tells my wife to get me something to drink because "Poor Michael must be exhausted."

So Thank You for giving me Jenny. We both know I don't deserve her, but I'm OK with that. Lord, You're either trying to make me feel guilty or just showing off. Wait, maybe You are just trying to inspire us all. That's very clever, Lord. You've given Jenny to all of us here to inspire us. We will try to follow her example of working hard all day, every day, to make Michigan the best state it can possibly be. And she will especially remind us here in the Senate that it is our job to clean up any messes left in the House. You can count on us, Lord.

So rest up, Lord. You must be exhausted after creating Jenny. Amen."

Mickey's Legislative Odds and Ends

Governor Granholm signed into law yesterday a bill that would require public schools to begin their school year after Labor Day. House Bill 4803 passed the Michigan Senate on September 20 with a 21-17 vote and would take effect beginning in the 2006 School Year. I was one of three Senate Democrats that voted for the bill.

It was a tough call and there were good arguments on both sides. Opponents of the bill said this was a local decision and should be left up to local school districts to establish the start date. Some argued that parents need daycare and a late start would be a strain for them. Supporters of the bill said it was

necessary for the tourism industry, and that people would vacation more in August if school didn't start early.

I voted for the bill, but not for any of those reasons. I remember how important summer vacations were to me as a kid, and I didn't want to shorten kids' vacations any further. I think they need that time of to play with their friends and grow socially, and to recreate themselves. When we passed the bill, there were some visiting school kids up in the gallery. According to the Gongwer News Service, the kids were squealing "Yes!" and dancing jigs in the aisles, they were so happy.

In a legislature that rarely weighs things from a kid's point of view, it was a pretty good day.

Mickey's TV Insider Show

Check out my TV Insider Show coming to a television station near you. Watch me interview local guests about politics, life, issues and concerns to our district.

Sterling Heights

Every Saturday and Sunday at 12:30 p.m.
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Utica

Every Wednesday at 9 a.m.
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Clinton Township

Last week of every month- Sat thru Thurs
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Roseville

Various Times
(Comcast Channel 18)

*Please note that Sterling Heights/Utica/Clinton Township will show the TV Insider Show on Comcast Channel 5 and Wide Open West Channel 10. Clinton Township will air the TV Insider Show at various times during the last week of every month. Roseville can see the TV Insider Show on Comcast Channel 18.

Coffee Hours

*Please note that since the District Office is in Roseville, I do not have set coffee hours in Roseville. However, I encourage you to visit the Roseville office. We even have a coffee pot. Everyone is welcome to attend the coffee hours and discuss their issues and concerns.

**October 3
7-9 p.m.**

Location: Sterling Heights Public Library
(40255 Dodge Park)
Sterling Heights

**October 31
7-9 p.m.**

Location: Clinton-Macomb Public Library
(35891 South Gratiot, north of 15 Mile)
Clinton Township

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